

The Chronicle and Index

OF THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY, BELFAST.

No. 1.]

BELFAST, JANUARY 1st, 1881,

[For Gratuitous Circulation.]

WITH the early spring-time of the present year the Unitarian Society will have completed the fiftieth year of its history. During that long period it has continued to provide for the circulation of religious literature which aimed at destroying false doctrines and superstitions, and at upholding a nobler faith and a higher life. Very steadily has the progress of religious thought taken place. The generation that commenced the Society has passed away, and scarcely one of all the band who were associated with it at the beginning now remains to rejoice in its Jubilee. Men have passed away, and opinions have changed. The great questions which stirred men's hearts half-a-century ago will scarcely command a hearing now. The Committee who are now employed in carrying on the work of the Society bear willing and ungrudging testimony to the labours of their predecessors, and feel assured that, in adapting the Society to the requirements of the present age, they are going on the same lines that many of them would have trod had they been spared until now. At all events, they believe that the controversies of this age are of a deeper and more vital character than those which separated Trinitarians and Unitarians fifty years ago, and that it behoves them to address themselves to their consideration, with seriousness and fidelity.

They hope to devise, during the present year, various methods of usefulness, and to find larger opportunities of reaching the increasing number of earnest inquirers after truth, who are dissatisfied with the organized forms of Christianity about them, looking for a loftier faith and diviner inspiration than is contained in all the creeds.

But they also desire to put themselves into more intimate relations with their subscribers and friends; and they have long had in contemplation the publication of a Journal, which shall at once be a Chronicle of religious activities connected with the Society, and an Index to books, worthy the attention of our readers, and to point to what may be done in the future. This plan they are trying to carry into effect in the present Publication, which is sent gratuitously to all the Subscribers to the Society. A

thousand copies of this Number will be circulated, and it is intended to increase the number in subsequent issues.

It is hoped that, by bringing our various friends into closer relationship with the Society, it will meet with a wider and more generous support, and that a much larger amount of good will be done. Our columns will indicate some of the directions in which it is proposed to extend the operations of the Society.

It will be a matter of satisfaction to the members of the Unitarian Society to learn that the year 1880 has been marked by steady progress in the business of the Depository. The sales have increased regularly, and the Annual Report will shew that the Society has steadily grown in public favour. We take this opportunity of reminding our readers that Unitarian and other Books and Periodicals, as well as all kinds of Stationery, can be readily and cheaply procured at the Depository, 33 Donegall Street.

The Committee of the Unitarian Society are carefully considering in what way in which they can most fittingly celebrate its Jubilee, and they hope in the next issue of the *Chronicle and Index* to make announcements of great interest and importance, and to create among the friends of Free Religious Thought in the North of Ireland, an earnest desire to co-operate in making the Jubilee a thorough success. We want all hands at work, all hearts to beat with sympathy, and all souls to be inspired with a high purpose. If we secure this, the Jubilee, while marking the historic past, will prove a nobler starting point for the future.

The Unitarian Society needs and desires hearty support. It supplies religious books of any kind at *cost prices*; it obtains, *on the lowest terms*, any books that may be ordered; it circulates *gratuitously* the best tracts it can obtain or produce; it makes grants of tracts to any one who is willing to distribute them; it supplies at cost price all books and requisites for Sunday-schools; and it provides a Depository

and Waiting-room, which are at the service of friends in town or from the country. It is trying to do a good work in liberalizing the thought of ministers and people—it should be earnestly sustained. Subscriptions will be gladly received by any of the following, or at the Depository:—

H. HYNDMAN, *Treasurer*, Waring St.
 R. M'CALMONT, } *Hon.* } Mountpottinger.
 J. C. STREET, } *Secs.* } Ulsterville Avenue,
 Belfast.

SPECIAL MISSIONARY SERVICES.

Since the first Sunday in October, the Rev. J. C. Street has been addressing very large congregations every Sunday evening, in the Church of the Second Congregation, Belfast, upon the following subjects:—

“Stopford Brooke, and the Church of England;” “The Salvation Army;” “The Evangelical Alliance;” “Some Causes of Scepticism;” “The National Crisis;” Have we a common Christianity?” “The Scotch Sermons;” “The most perfect Revelation of God;” “The Infallibility of the Bible;” “Miracles, no proof of Revelation;” “Perishing Creeds.”

These lectures have been attended not only by large numbers of persons, but by members of every sect in Belfast, as well as by many who are outside the borders of all Churches, and they have doubtless stirred up and kept alive the spirit of inquiry in the Community. Similar lectures will be delivered during the early months of 1881.

Six Sunday Evening Lectures, on “The Devil,” delivered in Mountpottinger Church, by the Rev. J. J. Wright, have been exciting a good deal of interest. The subjects were (1) “Where did the Devil come from.” (2) “Different Satans in different ages.” (3) “The Satans of the Old Testament and the New Testament.” (4) “The Satans of Theologians, Painters, and Poets.” (5) “Satan, Demons, Magic and Witchcraft.” (6) “Where has Satan gone to?” A great many strangers have attended these lectures; and tracts, kindly given by the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, were distributed at the door.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CONFERENCE.

A CONFERENCE of Sunday-school Teachers, in connection with the Sunday-school department of the Unitarian Society, was held in the

Rosemary Street Lecture Hall, Belfast, on Thursday, October 28th. J. M. Darbishire, Esq., President of the Association, occupied the Chair. In introducing the Essayist, Mr. Darbishire said the question of “The right use of the Bible in Sunday-schools” was of the greatest importance, and he had no doubt it would be carefully considered by the Essayist and the Conference.

The Rev. J. C. Street then delivered an extempore address on “How the Bible may be used with profit in Sunday-schools.” In the course of his opening remarks, he said, that two questions arise at the outset. (1). Whether they were justified in using the Bible in Sunday-schools at all? and (2). If used, should it be used as a class-book? He argued that, quite independent of the question of the authority and inspiration of the Books of the Bible, they were so pre-eminent as a religious literature, and formed so important a part of the history and life of the world, that it would be worse than folly to exclude them from the schools: they ought to have a place, as all other religious literatures should find a place, in a well-conducted Sunday-school. But he contended these books were quite unsuitable for use as mere class-books. They contained many matters that would be unintelligible to children, and many others that it was not well for them to read about. Used by judicious and reverent-minded teachers as a fount of religious helpfulness, they were beyond value, while to use them as a mere class-book, was to give false impressions of their nature and character, and to destroy their ethical use. He urged upon teachers the study of the Bible as a literature, and the use of its noblest lessons and examples as an incentive to the scholars under their care.

Mr. E. A. Fuhr agreed in the main with the Essayist, but would be inclined to go further. He did not care about making selections from the Bible for children, for if they saw we left anything out, they would be sure to search for those very passages.

Mr. M'Calmont thought no one should be allowed to take the Bible as a class-book in Sunday-schools who had not made it a careful study, and so could use it with wisdom and appropriateness.

Dr. Henry Burden expressed his agreement with the Essayist, but thought more attention should be paid to the teaching of the positive lessons of science. He was in favour of making

the Sunday-school a real help in the education of the young.

The Rev. T. Dunkerley thought that the method and extent of using the Bible should be left to the teachers themselves, many of whom could discharge their duties better with than without direct Scriptural aid.

The Rev. J. J. Wright, while holding the view that the Bible was not suited to the capacities of children, believed it could be used with advantage in the instruction of elder scholars.

After a few words from Mr. Thompson, the Rev. J. C. Street replied, and a most interesting meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the Chairman.

THE NEXT CONFERENCE.

A CONFERENCE of Sunday School Teachers and friends will be held at Comber, on Wed., the 19th of January, 1881, when a paper will be read by the Rev. T. Dunkerley, B.A., on "Teachers' Preparation Classes."

J. M. Darbishire, Esq., President of the Unitarian Society, will take the Chair.

Tea will be provided by the Comber friends at 5 o'clock.

We hope as many friends of Sunday-school education as possible will endeavour to be present.

The train leaves for Comber at 4.43 p.m., and for Belfast at 8 p.m.

PUBLICATIONS.

Scotch Sermons, 1880. Second Edition, London, MACMILLAN & CO.

This is, perhaps, the most notable theological publication which Scotland produced in the year 1880, not so much on account of its literary excellence or its deep erudition, though it ranks high in these respects, as on account of the status of its writers, and the character of the writings. The book is dedicated to the Dean of Westminster, and the preface declares that the sermons are "a few specimens of a style of teaching which increasingly prevails amongst the clergy of the Scottish Church!" If this be so, and who can better judge than Dr. Caird, Professor Knight, and Dr. Menzies, all of whom are contributors to the volume, then the preaching in the

Scottish Church is departing altogether from the dogmas of the Westminster Confession. We look in vain for the doctrines of Calvinism and Trinitarianism; they are utterly absent, and most of the Sermons are of the substance and character which are to be found in all the Unitarian and Free Churches of the united kingdom. The volume is fully as notable in its way as the famous volume of "Essays and Reviews," and seems likely to lead to even more important results. It is not for us to pronounce upon the consistency of the eleven clergymen of the Established Kirk of Scotland, or to determine whether, holding such views as are expressed in these twenty sermons, they are justified in retaining their positions; but we note the extraordinary fact that in one of the narrowest churches of Christendom, one of the broadest books of modern times has been born, and that its authors declare that its doctrines and principles increasingly prevail. We advise any one who can afford it to purchase the volume.

It is published at 10/6; but may be obtained at the Depository, 33 Donegall Street, for 8/.

"The Story of Religion in England," by BROOKE HERFORD.

It reads like a tale, and yet it is history. The style is so simple and charming, it rivets the attention of any child who can read at all, and the information conveyed is such as every grown up person in our churches ought to possess. Is there an old church or ruined abbey in your neighbourhood? This book will make it livingly interesting. In a series of short, stirring chapters, some of which are fine bits of biography, Mr. Herford tells the story of our religion from the time it was brought to these islands by the early missionaries, through all the changes it has seen, down to events of our own day. The book makes a capital class-book, and would do well as a present to any young man or young woman in our churches.

It is published at 5/-; may be had at the Depository for 3/7.

"Talks about Jesus," by M. J. SAVAGE, Boston, 1880.

This is a book for Students and Thinkers, though it is written in a way that makes it suitable for all earnest minds. It embodies in nine chapters the results of modern criticism and

thinking. These chapters are : (1). Introduction ; (2). Sources of knowledge ; (3). The Miraculous ; (4). Birth and Childhood ; (5). Public Life ; (6). Death and Resurrection ; (7). The Messianic Idea ; (8). Jesus and the Church, or, Was Jesus a Christian ? (9). Jesus and Humanity, or, Christianity among the Religions. Every preacher should read this book, a knowledge of its contents would remove many misconceptions, and while innumerable myths, fallacies, and superstitions would be swept away, the human Jesus would stand out more nobly and divinely than in all the creeds of Christendom. It may be obtained at the Depository for 4/2.

"Play with your own Marbles," and other Stories,
by J. J. WRIGHT. Second Edition.

Mr. Wright is a very interesting story-teller, and never fails to keep the attention of his youthful readers. His stories are healthy in tone, and fresh in style. This little book, of 112 pages, is very neatly printed and bound, and will be a welcome gift to many children. We are glad to see that a second edition is called for.

It is published at 1/- ; but may be purchased at the Depository for 9d.

"Jesus of Nazareth," by EDWARD CLODD.

The choice, simple language of the author of "Childhood of the World," and "Childhood of Religions," would make any book he writes more than ordinarily attractive, and nowhere does his fine, rare spiritual power find such scope as in the subject of this book. Taking us back to the Original Fountain of all religiousness, tracing through the Old Testament the accumulating antecedents of Christianity, indicating those streams of divine tendencies converging from many souls, and through many circumstances, upon the central soul of Jesus, we are made by the author to discern the growth of our religion, and the foreign matter with which it has been mixed.

Orthodox believers should read this book to have their minds opened to the errors under which the truth has been enwrapped. Unitarians should read the book to see what amount of divine truth there may be under the errors they rightly reject. For the young people of our Schools, if we would have them only understand and appreciate the Bible, this book cannot be too highly recommended.

The book is published at 6/- ; but may be had at the Depository for 4/6.

"The Life and Teachings of Theodore Parker,"
By PETER DEAN.

This book tells the story of one of the noblest lives of the world, and of religious teachings which are the crown and glory of humanity. Theodore Parker is the religious prophet of the nineteenth century, and though some of his opinions are already left behind in the world's growth, the principles which underlie his teachings belong to the permanent life of our race. This book of Mr. Dean's will stir up to the noblest manhood and womanhood all who come under its influence, while the lofty thought and animating faith of Parker will lead many souls into the cheeriest sunlight of God. The book should be read by everybody. It may be obtained at the Depository for 2/-.

"Stories from the Lips of the Teacher," by O. B. FROTHINGHAM.

The Teacher is Jesus ; the Stories are the Parables. Are your children tiring of them as they are read from the New Testament in school lessons, or repeated from the pulpit in ancient style ? Put this book into their hands, it breathes the rich, sweet spirit of the Master Story-teller ; the parables are re-told and re-set in such a winsome, suggestive way, a child will be charmed with them, and an older reader will derive new benefit. Published at 2/- ; may be had at 1/6.

"Young Days."

All Unitarian children should know *Young Days* ; it is their own paper, free from all theological phrases that parents might object to. The breath of "*Young Days*" is fresh as mountain air. It is published monthly at a penny. Here is the yearly volume for 1/2. The marvel is how the illustrations could be got up for the money.

SELECTIONS.

EMERSON says,—

"The world is young, the former great men call to us affectionately. We, too, must write Bibles, to unite again the heavens and the earthly world. The secret of genius is to suffer no fiction to exist for us, to realize all that we know, in the high refinement of

modern life, in arts, in sciences, in books, in men, to exact good faith, reality, and a purpose; and first, last midst, and without end, to honor every truth by use."

F. E. ABBOT says,—

"No man is worthy to join in the search for truth, who trembles at the sight of it when found. But a profound faith in the unity of all truth destroys scepticism by anticipation, and prophesies the solutions of reason."

COLERIDGE said,—

"He who begins by loving Christianity better than truth, will proceed by loving his own sect or church better than Christianity, and end in loving himself better than all."

SAADI ALSHIRARI tells this story,—

"For a week Abraham would scarce break his fast, for fear some hungry traveller might pass needing his store. Daily he looked out upon the desert, and on a day he beheld the bent form of an aged man, his hair white as snow, tottering towards his door. 'Guest of mine eyes,' said Abraham, 'enter thou with welcome, and be pleased to share my bread and salt.' The stranger entered, and to him was given the place of honour. When the cloth was spread, and the family had gathered round the board, each uttered 'Bismillah'—'In the name of God'—save one: the aged guest uttered no word. Abraham said, 'Old man, is it not right when thou dost eat thy food to repeat the name of God?' The stranger said, my custom is that of the fire-worshipper.' Then Abraham arose in wrath, and drove the aged Geber from his house. Even as he did so a swift-winged spirit stood before the patriarch and said, 'Abraham! for a hundred years the Divine bounty has flowed out in sunshine and rain, in bread and life to this man: is it for thee to with-hold thy hand from him because his worship is not thine?'"

SAADI also said,—

"Every one thinks his own wisdom perfect, and his own child beautiful. A Jew and a Mussulman were disputing in a manner that made me laugh. The Mussulman said, in wrath, 'If this deed of conveyance is not authentic, may God cause me to die a Jew!' The Jew said, 'I make oath on the Pentateuch, and if I swear falsely, I am a Mohammedan like you.' If wisdom were to cease throughout the world, no one would suspect himself of ignorance."

JOHN said to JESUS,—

"Master, we saw one casting out devils (demons) in thy name, and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us", and JESUS said unto him, "Forbid him not, for he that is not against us is for us."

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Advertisements to be addressed to Secretary of Publishing Committee, 33 Donegall St., Belfast.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Letters, Articles, Intelligence, &c., should be addressed to the Editor, at 33 Donegall St., Belfast.

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David M'Master	Rev. H. Rylett
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John Millin	Rev. J. J. Wright

General Committee:

The President, Vice-Presidents, Members of Executive Committee, and Subscribers of 10s. and upwards.

SUNDAY SCHOOL COMMITTEE:

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Miss Darbishire	Rev. H. Rylett
Miss Dobbin	D. Thompson
Rev. T. Dunkerley, B.A.	Rev. J. J. Wright

D. Thompson (Belfast), *Convener:*

Auditors:

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The Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretaries are *ex-officio* Members of all Committees.

Book Committee—	Rev. J. J. Wright, <i>Convener.</i>
Finance „	H. Hyndman, „
Publishing „	J. F. Mulligan „

ROSEMARY ST. MUTUAL IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

NINTH SESSION 1880-81.

The Committee have much pleasure in announcing the following Programme until the end of the Session:—1881.

Jany. 10—Music and Readings.
„ 17—Lecture—"Martyrs," MR. MAX VIETEL.

- Jany. 24—Paper—"Two Tragedies," Mr. F. D. F. O'CONNOR.
 „ 31—Lecture—"The Irish Land Question," Rev. J. C. STREET.
 Feby. 7—Paper—"Religious and Political Liberty," Mr. J. D. MAGEE.
 „ 14—Music and Readings.
 „ 21—Lecture—"The Humour and Pathos of Bret Harte," ... Rev. J. J. WRIGHT.
 „ 28—Paper—"Immortality," Mr. DAVID YOUNG.
 March 7—Reading—"Never Caught," by Hobart Pasha MR. VERE FOSTER.
 „ 14—Concert. (in aid of the Queen Street Children's Hospital.)
 „ 21—Paper—"The Female Head, a la mode," Mr. W. S. M'KEE.
 „ 28—Paper—"Triest," ... Mr. E. G. DAVID.
 April 4—Lecture—"Spanish Cities, No. 2." Mr. E. A. FUHR.
 „ 11—Paper—"What is the chief end of Life?" Mr. J. KNOX.

„ 18—(Easter Monday, no meeting.)
 „ 25—Concluding Soiree of the Session.
 May 2—Annual Business Meeting.
 The meetings are held on Monday Evenings, at 8 o'clock, in the Rosemary Street Schools.

Admission—to Lectures, Members Free; Non-members, Sixpence each; to Papers, Music, and Readings, Free.

The Papers and Periodicals to be obtained for the Reading-room, for the year ending 31st December, 1881, will be sold on Monday evening, 10th January, 1881, after completion of the programme.

Mr. Street's Elocution and Shakesperian Class meets on Friday evenings, at half-past eight o'clock, in the Rosemary Street School.

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Our Manure has always been considered one of the best and most reliable in producing good crops, and we have much pleasure in informing our friends that we have now so arranged our Machinery and Apparatus, that the manufacture is self-acting and uniform, The Manufactured Manure is dry, friable, and of the usual good quality.

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The length of time our manures have now been before the public, and the rapidly increasing demand, are the best guarantees we can give of their value, and of the estimation in which they are held.

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BELFAST, 1st January, 1881.

NOTICE OF REMOVAL.

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and

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(ESTABLISHED 1866)

The Proprietor has the great satisfaction to inform visitors from the country and the public generally, that the magnificent building (specially constructed to provide increased accommodation for the business of the Castle Restaurant) is now nearly completed, and will be

Opened Early in January, 1881.

Pending the completion and fitting up of the new building, business will be carried on as usual at the well-known premises 31 Castle Lane.

The precise date of opening the new premises will be duly announced in the local news-papers.

GEORGE FISHER,

PROPRIETOR.

THE CASTLE CAFE AND RESTAURANT,

10th December, 1880.

Printed by Moat Brothers, 11 Rosemary St., for the Unitarian Society, and Published at their Depository, 33 Donegall Street, Belfast.